

APPARATUS FOR ACCESSORIZING A SHOE AND METHOD OF MANUFACTURING THE SAME

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

5 The present invention relates to an apparatus for accessorizing a shoe with a decorative shoe accessory that removably and interchangeably attaches to a wearer of the shoe, and a method for making the same.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

Women's shoes come in a wide and perpetually changing variety of types and styles. The cutting-edge, fashion conscious person would need unlimited funds and unlimited shoe storage space to be up-to-date on all of the latest styles. Shoe designers are able to design shoes for essentially every occasion imaginable. Accordingly, a need exists to be able to accessorize a limited number of shoes to be the appropriate shoe for a number of different occasions.

15 SUMMARY OF INVENTION

The present invention relates to a method of accessorizing a shoe comprising mounting a first decorative article to a first anchor configured to mount to a wearer, the combination forming a first shoe accessory. The first shoe accessory is removably mounted to the wearer with an anchor. A shoe is removably mounted to the wearer's foot and the first shoe accessory is positioned on the wearer to appear to be associated with the shoe. The anchor comprises a first loop made from a material possessing elastic properties.

The shoe accessory may be positioned anywhere on the wearer's foot or ankle and may be positioned to appear to be integrated with a first portion of the shoe. When the
25 wearer attaches the shoe accessory to the foot at the balls of the foot, the decorative

article can be positioned to rest on the toe box of the shoe or a side section at the front of the shoe. When the wearer attaches the shoe accessory at the wearer's ankle, the decorative article can be positioned to appear to be affixed to a strap of the shoe or a section at the rear of the shoe.

5 In one embodiment of the present invention, the decorative article comprises a fabric flower. In other embodiments of the present invention, the decorative article comprises a ribbon, a first feather, or a fabric trimming.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF FIGURES

Figure 1 is a side elevation view of shoe and the shoe accessory of the present
10 invention;

Figures 2a and 2b are perspective views of the shoe accessory of the present invention;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of a shoe accessory according to the present invention attached to a foot;

15 Figures 4a, 4b are side elevation views of shoe and the shoe accessory of the present invention;

Figure 5 is a side elevation view of shoe and the shoe accessory of the present invention;

Figure 6 is a side elevation view of shoe and the shoe accessory of the present
20 invention;

Figures 7a, 7b, 7c are perspective views of shoe accessories according to the present invention;

Figures 8a, 8b are perspective views of the shoe accessory of the present invention; and

Figure 9 is a perspective view of a shoe accessory according to the present invention attached to a foot.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF FIGURES

The present inventive shoe accessory enables efficient and versatile accessorizing of a single shoe, or pair of shoes, with a wide variety of shoe accessories that appear to be integrated with a first portion of the shoe. The shoe accessory may be positioned to accessorize a number of locations on the shoe to change the look of the shoe. A number
10 of shoes can be accessorized with the same shoe accessory or, alternatively, the same shoe can be accessorized with a number of different shoe accessories. In either of these schemes, the wearer does not need to purchase and maintain a full wardrobe of shoes.

Figures 1-3 show a first embodiment of the present inventive method in which a woman's high heel shoe 10 is accessorized with a shoe accessory 12 comprising a fabric
15 flower. The shoe accessory 12 comprises an anchor 14 and a decorative article 16, the fabric flower (Figures 2a, 2b). The anchor 14 comprises a strand of clear wire that exhibits elastic properties and is formed into a loop by permanently affixing the ends of the wire to the bottom of the decorative item at an interface point 18 with an adhesive such as a liquid glue or hot glue gun. A soft fabric strip 20 may be affixed over the
20 interface point to prevent chafing or scratching of the wearer by the underside of the shoe accessory, and particularly the interface point 18.

As is shown in Figure 3, the shoe accessory 12 mounts to a wearer 21. The anchor 14 expands to fit over the front of the wearer's foot 22 and contracts to snugly,

but removably, attach the shoe accessory 12 to the wearer 21. In this embodiment, the shoe accessory removably attaches to the wearer around the balls of the wearer's foot. After the shoe that is being accessorized is placed onto the wearer's foot (Figure 3), the wearer positions the shoe accessory in the desired location to accessorize the shoe (Figure 5 1). The shoe accessory in this embodiment accessorizes the toe box 24 of the shoe by sliding the decorative item 16 over the front edge of the shoe opening 26. In this manner, the shoe accessory 12 appears to be integrated with the toe box portion 24 of the shoe 10.

The versatility of the shoe accessory is exhibited by its multi-position capability on a number of different shoes. Turning to Figure 4a, in another embodiment of the 10 invention, the wearer could attach the shoe accessory 12 to the wearer's foot at a position closer to the ankle 26. The decorative article is slid over a first side section 28 of the shoe 10 to accessorize the shoe with a different look. In yet another embodiment, the wearer attaches the shoe accessory 12 around the ankle 26. In this embodiment, the decorative article 16 is positioned to appear integrated with a first back section 30 of the 15 shoe 10. In other embodiments where the shoe accessory attaches to the wearer around the ankle, the decorative article 16 can be positioned to appear to be integrated with a first side section of the shoe or positioned to appear to be floating on the wearer's foot or leg.

Further versatility of the present invention is apparent in that the same shoe 20 accessory can be used with a number of different shoes. Figure 5 shows the shoe accessory 12 comprising a fabric flower decorative article worn with a shoe 10 having a strap 32 that wraps around the ankle 26. In yet another embodiment of the present invention, the shoe accessory 12 may be positioned on a shoe having a strap 34 or straps

that extend over the wearer's toes (Figure 6). In this embodiment, the decorative article appears to be integrated with the strap 34.

5 A number of decorative articles can be attached to the anchor to accessorize a number of different shoes. Figures 7a, 7b, 7c show shoe accessories according the present invention with decorative articles comprising a ribbon 36, feathers 38, and fabric trimmings 40, including strands of sequins. Other fabric trimmings can include fringe, beads, crystals, fur, bangles or rhinestones.

10 The shoe accessories according to the present invention are also easily interchangeable enabling the wearer of the shoe to easily change of the look of a particular shoe. The wearer needs to remove the shoe and then remove the first shoe accessory from the wearer's foot or ankle. Next the wearer attaches a second shoe accessory to the wearer's foot or ankle, replaces the shoe and positions the shoe accessory as desired. Likewise, the shoe accessories of the present invention are easily integrated with a number of different shoes. The wearer needs to remove the first shoe,
15 replace it with a second shoe and reposition the shoe accessory at the desired location on the second shoe.

The anchor 14 is positioned on a number of locations on the wearer's foot and ankle. Accordingly, the anchor material must possess suitable expansion and contraction characteristics. The anchor 14 must be able to expand to fit over the wearer's foot and
20 heel when the ankle is the desired point of attachment. Additionally, the anchor must be able to contract to snugly position the shoe accessory to multiple locations on the wearer without becoming uncomfortably tight. A clear wire possessing these characteristics is manufactured by Pepperell Braiding Company of Pepperell, Massachusetts, and is readily

available at arts and crafts stores. A prefabricated loop made of an appropriate material can also be used as the anchor.

In another embodiment of the present invention, as shown in Figures 8a, 8b the anchor 14 comprises a first and second loop 42, 44. In this embodiment, the interface point 18 has a first end and a second end 46, 48. The first loop 42 is affixed to the decorative article 16 at the first end 46 of the interface point 18 and the second loop 44 is affixed to the decorative article at the second end 48 of the interface point 18. The size and weight of the decorative article mandates whether only the first or the first and second loops are required to form the anchor 14. The shoe accessory of this embodiment attaches to the wearer in a similar manner to embodiments using a single loop for an anchor. The first and second loops 42, 44 of the anchor expand to fit over the front of the wearer's foot and contract to fit snugly on the wearer (Figure 9). The wearer then places a shoe on the foot and positions the decorative article on the desired portion of the shoe. It is also understood that the shoe accessory of this embodiment also can be positioned on the wearer's ankle. The second anchor adds additional stability to the shoe accessory.

Although the invention has been described in terms of exemplary embodiments, it is not limited thereto. Rather, the appended claim should be construed broadly, to include other variants and embodiments of the invention, which may be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the scope and range of equivalents of the invention.